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TMW 1:50 Author: Steven Downes

MERCEDES BENZ UNIMOGS

The 400 series Unimog is the ultimate implement carrier, uniquely versatile to be equipped for specialist and customised roles while capable of travelling on road up to 56 mph. Off-road, the vehicle offers exceptional all-wheel drive performance with a powerful Mercedes Euro IV engine and a specialist designed chassis allowing multiple mounting points for a vast array of add-on equipment. In contrast, the Unimog U 5000 series is the ultimate off-roader with a compact design for practicality combined with exceptional manoeuvrability and brute power for the most demanding of applications. It is the ideal workhorse in difficult conditions, excelling both on-road and off-road. The flexible ladder type frame ensures rigidity with great torsional flexibility for controlled driving coupled with long spring travel and extreme axle articulation for the most arduous off-road conditions. The OM934LA 4-cylinder in-line diesel engine delivers 231hp adhering to Euro VI exhaust gas emissions while the fully synchronised gearbox has eight forward and six reverse gears. NZG has now produced a number of specialist 1:50th scale versions of the Unimog 400 and 5000 series vehicles and I take a look at these in more detail.

Unimog 430 with Mulag MKM700 Combination Mower

The Mulag MKM 700 combination mower is the perfect companion for the 400 series Unimog, powered from the vehicle's front PTO and capable of mowing verges at the sides of highways with the boom mounted cutter head and low mounted verge cutter. NZG has done a great job in the engineering of the mower with a fully functional boom that features a full range of movement coupled with a detailed cutter head with roller and main cutter bar with simulated protective skirting. When not in use, the boom can be rotated to the rear out of the way. The verge cutter is again mounted to a pivoting arm with height and angular adjustment allowing it to simulate an authentic range of movement. The entire unit can be easily detached from the vehicle and the rear chassis has a counterweight ballast assembly fitted to keep the vehicle balanced. One slight issue with the mower is that if the boom is rotated towards the rear, the unit comes away from the hitch and falls off. A more secure way of securing the attachment may have been better.



Left:
An impressive model, the 1:50th scale U430 Unimog with Mulag MKM700 combination mower.

Right:
During transport, the boom can be rotated above the cabin, just like the full sized unit.





Left:
The body includes an automated, height adjustable coupling bar.



Above:
Additional lights are installed on the roof.



Left:
Zagro bodied U430 road rail vehicle from NZG.

Unimog U430 Shunting vehicle

Zagro is a German engineering company which formed in 1969, specialising in rail shunting technology. Their use of the Unimog U400 series allows various road/rail operations including track guidance and shunting. The new 1:50th scale model from NZG accurately captures the companies road rail U430 with shunting body, comprising of modelled cylinders for the air brake system and an automated coupling bar which can be raised. The rail bogies are hydraulically operated, rising for road operations and contacting with the included track section for rail use. The model is finished in the German signal yellow colours with DB markings while added extras over the standard Unimog include additional front and rear work lights and the front mounted strike plate which also doubles as additional ballast.

Unimog U430 with Schmidt Winter Package

Schmidt is a company that specialise in snow clearance equipment with a varied product range covering all snow clearance eventualities, from truck mounted plows and spreaders to snow blowers and sweeper brooms. NZG has modelled the Tarron plow and Stratos spreader in 1:50th scale as the perfect accessories for the Unimog 430 carrier.

The Tarron plow is a detachable unit that connects to the front plate of the U430. The frame construction allows for left and right angle adjustment although the height adjustment of the full sized unit is only simulated on the model. The frame has modelled stabiliser wheels with a plastic upper guard and a pair of safety marker boards simulating flags on the upper corners. At the rear, the Stratos spreader has a detachable top cover revealing the internal structure of the hopper with a rear chute and rotary discharge head all faithfully modelled. Added detailing includes the folding access ladder. True to the original, a mixture of metal and plastic components make up the spreader assembly with the blue and orange colours contrasting well.



Above:
The 1:50th scale version by NZG looks the part, capturing the looks of the Schmidt equipment perfectly.



Above: The rear spreader has a folding ladder for access and detailed chute and rotary dispenser.



Above:
Sersa Rail Group decorated U430 road rail vehicle with low sided rear platform.

Unimog U430 Road Rail vehicle

Another release based on the U430 road rail chassis is a Sersa decorated truck with rear platform. This configuration is ideal for track maintenance and construction duties, allowing transport of men and materials to the work area. The authentic white decoration is typical of the Sersa rail group company which offers a complete range of railway technology solutions, from planning and development to construction management. The model is fitted with narrow road wheels with cone shaped hubs while the rail bogies are adjustable, allowing both road and rail travel to be demonstrated.





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Right:
Ziegler Fire & Rescue body fitted to the U5023 chassis.



Left:
The upper body has a number of storage boxes along with hoses and spray nozzle.

Ziegler Fire & Rescue U5023

One interesting version of the U5023 is a Ziegler fire & rescue vehicle. Ziegler are a manufacturer of fire fighting vehicles, established in 1953 under the name Berwi N.V. The Unimog is an ideal platform for remote fire fighting applications and the 1:50th scale model features a rear module packed with detail, from the silver finished roller doors on the various compartments and the railings around the cabin frame to the rear access ladder leading to the upper deck where additional storage boxes and components are located. The cabin roof has a modelled hatch with flexible hoses and a nozzle within easy reach of the operator for in vehicle fire fighting. The predominant red with white trim and black chassis really looks the part and the paint is applied well, including the Ziegler logos and orange pin stripe.

Left:
The surface detailing of the various roller doors is excellent.



Cargo Body Unimog U5023

The 1:50th scale model from NZG has captured the rugged looks of the U5023 very well, with a fairly detailed underside highlighting the chassis and drivetrain to both axles and steering front axle. The side mounted fuel tank and silencer are nicely done with a protective heat shield fitted to the exhaust stack. The cabin has been authentically replicated, both inside and out with a quality paint finish. On the standard cargo version, the large loading platform body with low sides has a plastic tarpaulin cover which can be removed. The model is available finished in orange or blue while a white version is also available with a slight casting difference to the cab roof. A sand coloured off-roader has also been released, sharing the same castings as the white version with a modelled hatch in the roof and the addition of deep treaded rubber tyres.



Left:
The new 5000 series Unimog has been replicated well by NZG in 1:50th scale.



Left:
The cabin has a finished interior with mirrors and snorkel added to the frame.

Left:
The rear plastic tarpaulin cover can be removed to reveal the low sided platform.



Below:
Other versions include blue and white decorations along with an off-roader with deep tread tyres.



Above: Underside detailing includes the replicated drivetrain and steering axle.





1:50 SCALE

truck
MODEL WORLD



Above & Right:
The agricultural version of the U430 has tractor style tyres and both front and rear linkage.



Agricultural Unimog U430

Based on the same chassis, cabin and body as the standard version, the agricultural release from NZG is fitted with front and rear 3-point linkages which are static in operation with both shown in their raised position. Another difference to the original release is the addition of tractor style treaded tyres. The model is superbly finished in a green decoration with colour highlighting of the various coupling panels front and rear.



Above & Left:
U5023 fitted with HIAB crane and platform, available in THW and light grey versions.



Above:
The crane folds behind the cabin when not in use.

U5023 Hiab Crane

Two colour versions of the U5023 fitted with a HIAB knuckle boom crane and platform have been released, a plain light grey version with black chassis and crane and a blue version with white trim for the German Technisches Hilfswerk (THW) civil protection organisation. Both versions use the same castings which include extending outriggers, one of which also rotates into a storage position horizontally. The jacks are height adjustable and the crane can be unfolded and extended, complete with working cylinders for each telescoping section and a pivoting hook fitted to the tip. The chassis is fitted with a short platform with low sides which have structural ridge detailing. The cabin has a replicated interior with roof mounted blue beacons and fine scaled rear view mirrors attached to the frame. 🚛



Left:
The crane has plenty of movement with extending sections and hydraulic cylinders.

